

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2005

U.S. Department of Commerce

International Trade Administration – U.S. Export Assistance Center

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NORDIC REGION U.S. DEPT. OF COMMERCE'S MARKET OF THE MONTH

The Nordic region (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) is an attractive and lucrative market for U.S. companies. Its 24 million consumers are looking for high-quality and reputable products from abroad, and are receptive to U.S. products and services. U.S. companies active in the Nordic markets rarely encounter trade barriers or market access difficulties. Each country has its own strengths, but all countries are known for their state-of-the-art infrastructure, efficient telecommunications, transportation and logistic as well as smoothly functioning societies.

Best Prospects for U.S. Exporters

Automotive Parts and Accessories (Sweden)
Computer Hardware and Software
Distribution and Warehousing Services (Denmark)
Environmental Technologies
Franchising
Medical Equipment, Biotechnology, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals
Oil and Gas Equipment and Services (Denmark and Norway)
Renewable Energy
Safety and Security
Telecommunication Equipment and Services
Travel and Tourism

With offices in each country, the U.S. Commercial Service is poised to assist U.S. companies in establishing relationships and profiting in this market.

Denmark

Tel.: +45-3341-7315 Fax: +45-3542-0175
Email: copenhagen.office.box@mail.doc.gov
Web site: www.buyusa.gov/denmark/en

Finland

Tel: +358-9-616-250 Fax: +358-9-616-25130
Email: helsinki.office.box@mail.doc.gov
Web: www.buyusa.gov/finland/en

Norway

Tel: +47-21-30-88-66 Fax: +47-22-55-88-03
Email: oslo.office.box@mail.doc.gov
Web: www.buyusa.gov/norway/en

Sweden

Tel: +46-8-783-5346 Fax: +46-8-660-9181
Email: stockholm.office.box@mail.doc.gov
Web: www.buyusa.gov/sweden/en

COMMERCE SECRETARY TO LEAD FIRST TRADE MISSION TO CENTRAL AMERICA SINCE PASSAGE OF CAFTA-DR

**Guatemala, Honduras & El Salvador
October 16-22, 2005**

This mission will highlight the new opportunities for U.S. business in Central America that have emerged as a result of the passage of the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). With CAFTA-DR, **Application Cost \$7,700 excluding travel & lodgings deadline: Sept. 16.** For details, see www.buyusa.gov/centralamerica/en

NEW SERVICE ADVISES OF FOREIGN REGULATION CHANGES

"Notify U.S.", a service of the U.S. Commerce Department and the National Institute of Standards, is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers U.S. entities (citizens, industries, organizations) an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect their businesses and access to international markets.

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the "Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade" to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other member countries. The WTO Secretariat distributes this information in the form of "notifications" to all member countries. Member countries can review and comment on each other's proposed regulations while the regulations are still in the draft stage and subject to revision. In this way international transparency, international harmonization of standards, and international free trade are encouraged.

By subscribing to Notify U.S. (<http://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyus/data/index/index.cfm>), U.S. entities receive e-mail notifications of drafts or changes to domestic and foreign technical regulations for manufactured products.

World Trade Club Luncheon Meeting
"DOING BUSINESS WITH CHINA"
September 8, 2005 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
Little Rock Club – Regions Bank Bldg, 400 W. Capitol
Cost –\$25.00
For details contact
Little.rock.office.box@mail.doc.gov
Phone 501-324-5794, Fax 7380

WOOD PACKAGING MATERIAL REGULATIONS U.S., CANADA, MEXICO SEP 16, 2005

North American countries will enforce its regulations concerning Wood Packaging Material (WPM) for cargo imported to the United States, Canada, and Mexico as of September 16, 2005 based on shipments' arrival date. The regulation requires WPM, such as pallets, crates, wood boxes, and dunnage used to support, protect or carry cargo, to be either heat-treated or fumigated and marked in accordance with the international standard – International Standard on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) No. 15. In case of the non-compliance, the WPM may be returned to origin.

As the WPM has been served as a pathway for the introduction and spread of pests, International Plant Protection Convention of United Nations (IPPC) adopted the ISPM No. 15 to regulate WPM in international trade and encourages all member countries to implement the WPM regulation.

The EU and Korea have already implemented the WPM regulation since May 2005 and June 2005 respectively. The U.S., Canada, and Mexico will commence enforcing the ISPM No. 15 as of September 16, 2005. It is anticipated that many countries will also implement the ISPM No. 15 soon but the date of implementation will depend on each domestic regulation.

The approved treatments for WPM are 1) heat treatment to a minimum wood core temperature of 56°C for a minimum of 30 minutes or 2) fumigation with methyl bromide. To certify treatment, the WPM must be marked with the IPPC logo. When the non-compliant WPM is used for the transportation of cargoes, such cargoes would be returned to origin and any expense involved with non-compliant WPM shall be the responsibility of the shipper, consignee, and cargo owner.

We recommend exporters using WPM for cargo imported to above-mentioned countries to meet the WPM requirement to avoid any losses.

For more details, please visit
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/wpm/>
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/for/cwpc/wd/pkgc.shtml>.

PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT FOR ALL SHIPMENTS TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

As of August 22, 2005, Czech Republic Customs Office strictly requires phytosanitary certificate for all import shipments in wooden packing or for palletized cargo coming into the Czech Republic.

Consignments that do not have the phytosanitary certificate will be destroyed.

PASSPORTS REQUIRED FOR MEXICO/CANADA/ CARIBBEAN TRAVEL

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative will require all travelers to and from the Americas, the Caribbean, and Bermuda to have a passport or other secure accepted form of documentation to enter or re-enter the United States. The Travel Initiative will affect all U.S. citizens traveling within the Western Hemisphere who do not currently possess valid passports. It will also impact certain foreign nationals who currently are not required to present a passport to travel to the U.S., namely most Canadian citizens, citizens of the British Overseas Territory of Bermuda, and Mexican citizens. Click here for details

http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cbpmc/cbpmc_2223.html

NAFTA FORUM IN VERACRUZ SEP 23

The U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce, Gulf Chapter in Veracruz, is organizing an event to introduce U.S. financial institutions to the industrial community in Veracruz, and to promote business with the U.S. U.S. companies that are not able to travel, can participate "virtually" through the Forum website, where possibilities for matchmaking are offered, without cost for U.S. firms. For more detailed information on this event, please contact Alicia Herrera, U.S. Commercial Service, Mexico City at Alicia.Herrera@mail.doc.gov, Phone 011-52-5140-2629, Fax 011-52-5566-1111.

U.S.DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCES NEW ONLINE SYSTEM FOR U.S. EXPORTERS AND BANKS

On August 25, 2005 the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service launched a new Web site that will expedite and simplify documentation for three USDA export financing programs. Additional information about the GSM Online System is available at

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/gsmonline/intro.asp>.

Exporters who need further information should contact the Contract and Registration Branch of FAS at (202) 720-3224, or by email at AskGSM@fas.usda.gov.

USEFUL WEBSITES

The African Growth and Opportunity Act's "2005 AOGA Competitiveness Report" is available on line.

http://www.ustr.gov/assets/Document_Library/Reports_Publications/2005/asset_upload_file604_7857.pdf

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of our newsletter. Any mention of non-government sources does not constitute endorsement. For comments or questions contact us at

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